

feathers, rump and upper tail coverts greyer and not quite so reddish in general tone. On the underside, the rufous edges of feathers of breast and abdomen deeper.

COLOUR OF SOFT PARTS : Iris dark brown, edges of eyelids lemon yellow, maxilla black but brown on base, mandible very pale horny, legs and feet brownish horny, claws horny, pads white.

MEASUREMENTS (in flesh) : Wing 232, tail 155+, bill 33 mm.

Its crop contained no animal matter, but was distended with freshly swallowed plant material. The bulk of this food consisted of green leaves of *Spiraea* sp. (Rosaceae), *Herpetospermum caudigerum* (Cucurbitaceae) and young circinate leaves of fern of the Order Filicales in approximately equal quantities, moderate quantity of green leaves of *Thalictrum chelidonii* (Ranunculaceae), and a few fronds of fern of the Order Filicales. Most of the leaves were swallowed whole or nearly so, and two of the fern fronds were about 9.5 cm. long. There was also a quantity of leaf fragments, bits of tender shoots, petioles and leafbuds, all apparently belonging to plants named above.

I am thankful to the authorities of the British Museum (Natural History), London, for their courtesy in extending me facilities to examine their material. I am indebted to; Mr. J. Delacour for kindly comparing my specimen with the material at the American Museum of Natural History, New York; Shri S. S. Saha of the Zoological Survey of India for his generous assistance in this work; Shri V. S. Agarwal of the Botanical Survey of India for kindly identifying the plant material; and to Shri A. K. Karmakar, Artist, Zoological Survey of India, for the preparation of the coloured sketch.

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,  
INDIAN MUSEUM,  
CALCUTTA-13,  
September 18, 1967.

BISWAMOY BISWAS

## 7. OCCURRENCE OF THE LITTLE CRAKE, *PORZANA PARVA* (SCOPOLI), IN BOMBAY

In 1939 (Birds of Bombay Island & Salsette, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 40 : 629), we referred to the Little Crane, *Porzana parva* (Scopoli), as an aberrant cold weather straggler to our area based on a specimen obtained at Malabar Hill, Bombay, by A. H. A. Simcox.

We mentioned however that the specimen listed in the old card catalogue of the Society's collection prepared by Mr. N. B. Kinnear had not been seen (presumably being untraceable).

It was probably this uncertainty which prompted Ripley (1961)<sup>1</sup> to ignore this southern-most record and to restrict them to 'A few wintering records for West Pakistan in Sind and Baluchistan, and Gilgit'.

The specimen (B.N.H.S. Col. No. 13878, ♀, 27 Nov. 1914) has now been rediscovered, having been listed among Baillon's Crake, *Porzana pusilla* (Pallas). It is admittedly very similar to this species but the larger wing 98 (85-96 in *P. pusilla*), the absence of the white edge to the first primary and to the tips of the wing coverts, the buff-coloured breast and under-parts, the faint traces of black barring on the flanks and under-tail coverts, the structure of the wing, and comparison with specimens from Iraq, leave no doubt that the bird was correctly identified.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
HORNBILL HOUSE, APOLLO STREET,  
BOMBAY-1,  
September 27, 1967.

SÁLIM ALI  
HUMAYUN ABDULALI

#### 8. SOUTHWARD EXTENSION OF THE RANGE OF THE SLENDERBILLED GULL (*LARUS GENEI* BRÉME)

The Slenderbilled Gull (*Larus genei* Brème) is known to breed at Las Belas in Baluchistan and in parts of Sind, and as a non-breeding visitor to the shores and tidal creeks of Sind. The southern-most records are from Bhavnagar in Kathiawar where Dharmakumarsinhji obtained a specimen on 4 December 1948 (BNHS Collection No. 14176) and referred to it in his BIRDS OF SAURASHTRA (1955 p. 213). Dr. Sálím Ali does not mention this bird in BIRDS OF KUTCH (1945) nor 'The Birds of Gujarat' (1954, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 52: 375), and Ripley's SYNOPSIS leaves the first distribution unchanged.

It may therefore be worthwhile recording that on 4 December, 1957, I collected one (BNHS Collection No. 21330) in Manori Creek, Salsette, Bombay, and have subsequently seen them in small parties and obtained specimens on 28 December 1960 and 9 January 1964, in the same area (Manori and Arnala Island). It would appear to be a fairly regular winter visitor to the Bombay coast. It is perhaps not better known because, not being a scavenger like the other gulls, it keeps out more at sea. The 3 specimens obtained by me and also the one from Bhavnagar are all in immature plumage, having dark subterminal bands to the tail.

ST. XAVIER'S HIGH SCHOOL,  
BOMBAY,  
May 6, 1967.

BR. A. NAVARRO, S.J.

<sup>1</sup> RIPLEY, S. D. (1961) : Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan.